

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Jerald Meyer on 06/24/2008.

The application has been amended as follows: Claims 4 and 5 have been cancelled. Claim 1 is changed to read as follows;

1. An axial fan in which an impeller (1) comprises a hub (2), motor-powered so that it rotates about its own central axis (3) in a predetermined direction of rotation (V), and a plurality of blades (5) extending from the hub (2) in directions transversal to the axis (3);

the hub (2) having a cup shape and being formed by a bottom wall (6) and a ring-shaped side-wall (7);

the bottom wall (6) having a plurality of long ribs (20) arranged in a radial direction and extending in height towards the hub (2) cavity, each of the ribs (20) abutting on an internal face of the ring-shaped side wall (7) and delimiting, together with said ring-shaped side wall (7), a corner area of the bottom wall (6) positioned in front of the rib (20) with reference to the direction of rotation (V);

the fan being characterized in that each corner area has a through-hole (9) for discharging any debris, in particular water, sand, soil or sludge, from the hub (2) cavity to the outside of the hub (2);

in each of said corner areas the through-hole (9) is delimited by at least three walls (10-15), of which a first wall (10) substantially acts as an extension of the ring-shaped side wall (7) and of which a second wall (11) substantially acts as an extension of the rib (20);

each of the said through-holes (9) being positioned between two circumferentially adjacent ribs (20) and substantially closer to one adjacent rib (20) than the other.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The claims in the application are deemed to be directed to a non-obvious improvement over the invention patented in Patent Number 3,303,995. The claims comprise an axial fan with through-holes delimited by at least three walls, of which a first wall substantially acts as an extension of a ring-shaped side wall and of which a second wall substantially acts as an extension of the rib; each of the said through-holes being positioned between two circumferentially adjacent ribs and substantially closer to one adjacent rib than the other

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Aaron R. Eastman whose telephone number is (571)270-3132. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu 9:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Look can be reached on (571) 272-4820. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Aaron R. Eastman/
Examiner, Art Unit 3745

/Edward K. Look/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3745